

## 1      Claims

2

3      1. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, comprising the  
4      steps of:

5                (a) composing an optically readable indicia;

6                (b) applying said optically readable indicia to an object;

7                (c) optically scanning said indicia to generate an electronic representation  
8      of said indicia;9                (d) storing said electronic representation of said indicia, said storing being  
10     done by a device used to perform said optical scanning;11                (e) downloading said electronic representation of said indicia to a  
12     computing device;13                (f) causing said computing device to communicate a signal to a central  
14     server, said signal including information to identify said optically readable  
15     indicia;16                (g) programming said central server to associate said optically readable  
17     indicia with a plurality of addresses in response to selected criteria, whereby said  
18     optically readable indicia is associated with different addresses in response to  
19     differences in said selected criteria;20                (h) said central server being responsive to said signal i) to contact a server  
21     at an address associated with said signal and said optically readable indicia, and  
22     ii) obtain information from said server associated with said address and  
23     communicate said information received from said server associated with said  
24     address to said computing device for display or other use at said computing  
25     device.

26

27      2. A method as in claim 1, wherein said central server is responsive, to said  
28     signal to contact said server at an address associated with said signal and said



1       7. A method as in claim 5, wherein said printing comprises printing of said  
2       optically readable indicia by said central server.

3

4       8. A method as in claim 1, wherein said criteria comprises differences in time,  
5       whereby said optically readable indicia is associated in response to differences in  
6       time with different addresses over time.

7

8       9. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, comprising the  
9       steps of:

10               (a) composing an optically readable indicia containing information  
11       respecting a plurality of different elements;

12               (b) applying said optically readable indicia to an object;

13               (c) using a scanning device to optically scan said indicia and generate an  
14       electronic representation of said indicia;

15               (d) storing said electronic representation of said indicia, said storing being  
16       done by said device used to perform said optical scanning;

17               (e) downloading said electronic representation of said indicia to a  
18       computing device;

19               (f) causing said computing device to communicate a signal to a central  
20       server, said signal including information to identify said optically readable  
21       indicia;

22               (g) programming said central server to associate said optically readable  
23       indicia with a plurality of addresses in response to selected criteria selected from  
24       said information respecting a plurality of different elements, whereby said  
25       optically readable indicia is associated with different addresses in response to  
26       differences in said selected criteria;

27               (h) said central server being responsive to said signal

28                       i) to contact a server at an address associated with said signal and

CONFIDENTIAL  
DO NOT COPY

1 said optically readable indicia at the time of said contacting of said server, and  
2 ii) obtain information from said server associated with said address  
3 and communicate said information received from said server associated with  
4 said address to said computing device for display or other use at said computing  
5 device.

6 10. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 9,  
7 wherein a consumer specific record is generated in response to the  
8 communication of said signal to said central server.

9 11. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 10,  
10 wherein said consumer specific record contains information identifying such  
11 consumer.

12 12. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 11,  
13 wherein said information identifying such consumer is identification data  
14 contained on the hard drive of said computing device.

15 13. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 9,  
16 wherein said indicia is a bar-code.

17 14. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 9,  
18 wherein said communication causes the downloading of information responsive  
19 to particular consumer attributes and/or information and coded with an set  
20 signal, and/or a direct site address.

21 15. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 9,  
22 wherein said communication results in transfer of the inquiry to a site unrelated  
23 to a site associated with the optically readable indicia scanned by the consumer.

24 16. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 15,  
25 wherein said transfer to said unrelated site is accompanied by an explanation to  
26 the consumer.

27 17. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 15,  
28 wherein said transfer to said unrelated site is accompanied by a payment to an

1 individual associated with the composing of said optically readable indicia.

2 18. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, comprising  
3 the steps of:

4 (a) composing an indicia containing information respecting a plurality of

5 different elements;

6 (b) incorporating said indicia into an audiovisual production;

7 (c) using a device capable of detecting said indicia to generate an  
8 electronic representation of said indicia;

9 (d) storing said electronic representation of said indicia, said storing being  
10 done by said device used to perform said optical scanning;

11 (e) downloading said electronic representation of said indicia to a  
12 computing device;

13 (f) causing said computing device to communicate a signal to a central  
14 server, said signal including information to identify said indicia;

15 (g) said central server being responsive to said signal

16 (i) to contact a server at an address associated with said signal and  
17 said indicia, and

18 (ii) obtain information from said server associated with said address  
19 and communicate said information received from said server associated with  
20 said address to said computing device for display or other use at said computing  
21 device.

22 19. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
23 wherein a plurality of addresses are associated with said signal and said server is  
24 contacted and produces address information in response to selected criteria, said  
25 criteria being selected from said information respecting a plurality of different  
26 elements, whereby said indicia is associated with different addresses in response  
27 to differences in said selected criteria.

28 20. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,

DO NOT FILE

1 wherein said indicia is an audio cue.

2 21. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
3 wherein said indicia is a pattern displayed on the cathode ray tube of a television  
4 screen.

5 22. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
6 wherein said indicia is a series of flashes of various duration produced by the  
7 cathode ray tube of a television set.

8 23. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
9 wherein said indicia comprises a sequence of tones having different frequencies.

10 24. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
11 wherein said indicia comprises a number of tones of different frequencies output  
12 by said audio device simultaneously.

13 25. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
14 wherein said indicia comprises a sequence of tones having different frequencies,  
15 and additional tones output during the output of said sequence at frequencies  
16 different from the tones of said sequence.

17 26. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
18 wherein said indicia are transmitted periodically during the course of an  
19 audiovisual program that correspond to content related to the substance of said  
20 program.

21 27. A method for supplying information to consumers on request, as in claim 18,  
22 wherein said indicia are transmitted periodically during the course of an  
23 audiovisual program and have a content that correspond to the particular  
24 portion of the program approximately during which they are transmitted.

25 28. A method according to claim 1 wherein the optically readable indicia  
26 comprise invisible ink barcoding or digital watermarking.

27 29. A method according to claim 1 wherein the indicia are readable by a  
28 magnetic or other non-optical device.